

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

[039] A backlit flat panel display includes a fluorescent tube positioned for illuminating the display, and a plurality of display illuminating LEDs on the periphery of the display. The fluorescent tube illuminates the display through a first range of brightness above a predetermined transition level and the LEDs illuminate the display through a second range of brightness below the transition level. When the illumination of the display is adjusted through the transition level to account for changes in ambient light, the LEDs and the fluorescent tube are operated together, so that the combined brightness of the illumination provided by the LEDs and the fluorescent tube will provide the desired display brightness; this advantageously compensates for delayed illumination of the fluorescent tube at start up and for persistence in the tube after shutdown.